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SENSITIVE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CASC](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY SITREP: DISASTER RELIEF CONTINUING

REF: A. ROME 399

[B](#). ROME 392

[1](#). (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified; please protect accordingly.

Death Toll Hits 250

[2](#). (U) The Italian media has reported that the death toll for Monday morning's earthquake has now reached 250, with 1,000 injured, including 100 seriously. On Tuesday strong aftershocks provoked the collapse of several buildings in L'Aquila, and were felt as far away as Rome. One hundred and fifty victims were rescued from the rubble, including a 20-year-old student from Rimini who was rescued 57 hours after the earthquake hit. Funerals for the victims are expected to take place Friday.

No American Citizen Casualties

[3](#). (U) As of 1200 local time, there are still no American citizens among the dead, injured or those officially listed as missing.

Relief Efforts Ongoing

[4](#). (U) Seven thousand aid workers converged on Abruzzo from around Italy. By Tuesday night, the Department of Civil Protection had set up 20 tent cities with 16 field kitchens that could house 14,500 people. Twenty-five thousand people in Abruzzo are reported homeless, with the press noting that many whose homes are intact are afraid to return because of the continuing aftershocks. Fifteen thousand of the homeless are in hotels on the Adriatic coast, with the rest in tent cities or sleeping in their cars. On Tuesday the Department of Civil Protection asked the Italian Army for 1,000 engineers, who are already on the scene. The Italian military headquarters told the Embassy that the focus is on engineering units because of the need for a trained workforce focusing on infrastructure and utilities, not first responders.

[5](#). (SBU) The Italian military and the Department of Civil Protection have thanked the Embassy for its repeated offers of US military assistance. They have indicated at this time GOI has no need for help with rescue operations. Prime Minister Berlusconi thanked the dozens of nations that have offered search and rescue teams and first responders, but said that Italy has sufficient resources.

[6](#). (U) In L'Aquila, Prime Minister Berlusconi told the residents, "We will not leave you alone, and do not worry because the reconstruction will be quick." He added that he will be in Abruzzo every day to deal with the disaster, describing it as his "duty."

POTUS-Berlusconi Call

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17. (SBU) On Tuesday, President Obama called Prime Minister Berlusconi to express his condolences and those of the American people. The President assured the Prime Minister that the United States stands ready to help. The GOI had been declining international offers of aid, but Berlusconi told the Italian press that he would accept America's offer to help with reconstruction. Berlusconi said that he would provide a list of items that the US could help with today, and said that America's help in rebuilding cultural assets or a particular neighborhood or town would be appreciated. The Prime Minister's office also indicated that reconstruction assistance would be accepted from other countries.

18. (U) Embassy Rome will continue to monitor the situation.  
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